

"There, and there, and there," cried the children, pointing, and Mr. Darcy began picking up the crabs with a shovel and tongs and dropping them back into the wash-bowl. "Fourteen, fifteen, sixteen," he counted as he discovered three crabs clinging to the curtains. "Where is the seventeenth?"

"I guess he's in my shoe," said Louis. Sure enough Mr. Darcy found him there, and shook him out into the wash-bowl, which he hastily covered with a geography book.

"Now," he said; "get dressed; and after breakfast thank those seventeen animals for spending the night with you, and then take them back to the creek and throw them politely into the water."

So after breakfast, Louis and Joe, joined by Helen and Eunice and Phyllis, took a pailful of crabs down to the creek, and soon seventeen astonished crabs were back with their families, telling the story of their surprising adventures.—Children's Magazine.

MIGNONNE.

By Helen Elizabeth Coolidge.

Her real name was Henrietta, but this had seemed too long, and so, by common consent, the much-loved little girl had come to be "Mignonne" to every one in the gay hotel at L—. She was not spoiled by all the attention she received, but flitted from one group to the other like a butterfly, chatting as easily with gouty old gentlemen and the lovely old spinsteres as with pretty young girls, or the mammas of other little girls, less pretty and more shy than herself. However, we never would have called her "The Little Minister" if we had not seen and heard her on that particular Sunday of which I write. I should, in a preface, tell you that she was under the care of a very sweet governess, her mother being detained at home by grandmother's illness, and papa away in the distant Philippines on duty as one of Uncle Sam's officers.

It was a beautiful Sunday and as the little church with its cross-tipped spire could easily be seen and reached, nestling in the valley the hotel overlooked, there was really no excuse for the stay-at-homes.

Mignonne, dressed in white, with a sash to match the blue of her eyes, and forget-me-nots in her leghorn hat, and with her white-bound prayerbook tightly clasped, went the rounds of that hotel, with words like these:

"Don't you hear the church-bells ringing?" "Not going to church? Oh, yes, do! Come with me; I'll show the way." "Reading the papers? Oh! you ought to read your Bible—it's Sunday!"

"Too sleepy? Well! God doesn't ever sleep because He has to watch that you don't get hurt."

"Roads too dusty for your pretty slippers? I'll clean 'em for you when we get home." "Oh, come! The hymns are so beautiful! Maybe they'll sing 'Jerusalem, the Golden!' Oh! oh!"

The Rev. Robert Ellis had cause for surprise as he crossed the churchyard that morning in seeing the unusual procession of young and old, rich and poor, who were making their way into the little ivy-colored building, and who filled it to overflowing, as he saw, when he took his place in the chancel.

As he stepped into the pulpit, his MS. was tightly rolled, and I noticed that it was never opened. Those who knew him well said, however, that he had never preached so well, so earnestly, so eloquently. Did he gather inspiration from a pair of thoughtful blue eyes, which, from the front pew, looked into his, and can you tell me why his text was, "And a little child shall lead them?"

THE GAME.

The car was crowded, but the two pretty girls who entered it at Madison avenue had no trouble in getting seats. They thanked the men who gave them places, and immediately fell into an absorbing conversation, so absorbing that one of them did not look up when the conductor called for fares. He glanced at her doubtfully, but after a second's hesitation, passed on; it was almost beyond human possibility to be certain of every one at the crowded hour.

As they left the car, one of the girls turned to the other triumphantly. "Another nickel in!" she exclaimed.

"Another nickel? What do you mean?" the other asked, puzzled.

Claire laughed, showing her prettiest dimple. "I mean," she explained, "that that's five nickels I've saved this week by free rides. Of course I don't care for the nickels, but it's loads of fun to do it."

"But—Claire Ellis—it isn't honest!"

Claire laughed again. "What's the harm?" she asked. "The company's far too rich. Lots of people do it, only they don't own up."

"But I should think the conductor would catch you."

"That's just the fun of it—I've found out how. If I think the conductor is going to ask me, I just smile right into his eyes. They never insist when you do that. Once, though, I did nearly get caught. I took a big chance that time, for I'd been shopping, and had spent every cent except a ten-dollar bill—and the conductor was a grim old thing, who wouldn't know a pretty girl from a cow! When he said, 'Fare, miss,' I was scared for a second; then before I realized it, my life was saved. The man who had given me his seat and was standing just in front of me, said, 'I paid for that young lady—I gave you two tickets.' The conductor looked doubtful, but he couldn't be sure because the car was crowded, so after an instant he went on."

"But, Claire Ellis—to let a strange man pay for you!"

Clare flushed a little.

"Well, of course I didn't quite like it, but what could I do?" she protested. "And I'm sure he was very nice about it, only he did keep staring at me afterward. I wouldn't have father know it for anything—he's so fussy over some things. Don't you dare breathe it to a living soul, Bess Harriman!"—Selected.

The baby was slow about talking, and his aunt was deploring the fact. Four-year-old Elizabeth listened anxiously.

"Oh, mother," she ventured at length, "do you think he'll grow up English? We couldn't any of us understand him if he turned out to be French!"